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ABSTRACT

The "Seattle Daily Times" and the "Seattle Post-Intelligencer" from February through September 1897 were reviewed to determine their reaction to President Grover Cleveland's executive order that abruptly withdrew from further private claims huge stretches of land remaining in the public domain. Specifically, the study sought to determine whether these newspapers reflected and encouraged the viewpoint of the commercial community to the exclusion or ridicule of supporters of conservation. Results indicated that the "Post-Intelligencer" served as an organizational focus for the commercial community opposing the reserves by sponsoring protest meetings, printing the times and locations and giving extensive coverage to speakers who attacked Cleveland's action. The "Times" also opposed the reserves editorially and printed articles describing the Seattle Chamber of Commerce campaign. Sentiment in favor of conservation was either ignored, or, in the case of citizens too prominent to ignore, belittled or ridiculed. These results suggest that a relationship involving political communication had formed between the commercial press and the merchant community that informally resembled the relationship between political party and subsidized press in the Jacksonian period. (HOD)

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CONSERVATION AND THE FRONTIER PRESS: SEATTLE, 1897

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The political function of the mass circulation commercial press of the late 19th century was both less dominant and more ambiguous than that of the party press of the Jacksonian period prior to the Civil War. The functional relationship of the political press, the parties and the electorate, anchored by financial subsidy, was gone, or at least more indirect.[1] The financial benefits of subsidy or patronage comprised a revenue source less important to a commercial daily newspaper than advertising payments from a community of merchants who sought buyers for their goods. In this new relationship based on the reader as consumer, political partisanship was a potential hindrance to reaching the largest possible audience of readers and buyers. Penny press papers professed neutrality in the acceptance of paid material, and some also stopped making declarations of overt political preferences. Politics was just one form of news in a world of events.[2]

Yet it should not be assumed that severing the financial subsidy from political parties would make the press less partisan

or insensitive to the political inclinations of its major source of revenue. Newspapers continued into the 20th century to declare themselves Republican, Democratic or whatever. But economic survival was no longer linked to these allegiances, at least as directly as before. The prosperity of the press depended on the prosperity of the urban commercial community in which it existed.[3] This paper suggests that under circumstances when a political issue affected the perceived well-being of the local commercial community, the newspaper became the political voice of that community, rather than that of other political voices in the same locality.

The interrelationship of the newspaper's economic welfare and that of the supporting commercial community was particularly evident in the developing cities, towns or camps on the frontier. The voice of the newspaper was likely to be that of the community booster, the promoter, the general merchant or local industrialist/developer who hoped to create a profitable metropolis from a sea or river port, road or railroad crossing, or a millsite. The editor might be one of the original developers of a townsite or someone hired by the first entrepreneurs to promote a prosperous future.[4] The information in the frontier newspaper would tend to praise, even glorify, the advantages of living in that particular location and omit any undesirable local features.

Federal economic policy until late in the 19th century was to encourage limitless business expansion on the frontier by making the nation's natural resources available to anyone who found a way to profit by their use. Vast tracts of western lands

were given to railroad builders, road builders, speculators and individual homesteaders to encourage the spread and development of markets. Toward the end of the century, however, a sense of the finiteness of the United States and its resources began to emerge. Natural scientists deplored the destruction of other species and habitats. Populists and, later, Progressive reformers criticized the inefficient waste of depleting forests to provide excessive profits for monopolistic corporations.[5] However, any federal restrictions on the use of natural resources for commerce were strongly opposed by western miners, lumbermen, ranchers, farmers and supporting communities of traders and suppliers. Westerners tended to view this new notion of conservation as a means by which the East retained economic control of the nation by preventing the West from using the trees, minerals, water or lands in the same manner by which the East had gained its wealth and power. Whether the restrictions were intended to preserve resoures for future generations or to conserve them for more efficient use, the result was viewed as an obstacle to western development. Not all westerners were opposed to notions of conservation, however. In this same period, the 1890s, preservationists and recreationists formed the Sierra Club in California and the Mazamas in Oregon. In Washington, a forestry association was formed by prominent Puget Sound citizens, some of them lumbermen. These groups indicated at least some support for the notion of conservation. The question this paper addresses is whether the press in Seattle acknowledged this new political voice or any viewpoint but that

of the commercial community when President Grover Cleveland abruptly brought the western conservation debate to a crisis in early 1897. As one of the final acts of Cleveland's second term, he signed an executive order that abruptly withdrew from further private claims huge stretches of land remaining in the public domain. Millions of acres of reserves, the nucleus of what would eventually become the National Forest system, were established by executive order. In Washington State, Cleveland's order blocked further private exploitation on more than 8 million acres in the mountain ranges surrounding Puget Sound and Seattle.

This paper examines the reaction of the two daily newspapers in Seattle, the largest city in the state. The Seattle Daily Times and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer were reviewed from February through September, 1897. During this period, Congress responded to the outcry from the West and eased restrictions on the forest reserves until a study could be made. This review focuses on whether these newspapers reflected and encouraged the viewpoint of the commercial community to the exclusion or ridicule of supporters of conservation. The result was compared with the performance of the political press when it was under party subsidy rather than a commercial press dependent on advertising revenues.

The late 19th century idea that the natural resources of the United States were limited and that the federal government should restrict, rather than further encourage, rapid exploitation by private entrepreneurs was not easily assimilated. It was particularly unwelcome to apostles of growth in the West, who saw themselves poised for the same sort of economic development and

personal enrichment that accompanied consumption of natural resources in the East and Midwest. Not until late in the century had questions been raised about the federal government's policy of virtually giving away public domain lands in the West to encourage corporate and individual economic expansion. Instances of preservation, such as Yellowstone National Park in 1872, were few. However, a science of nature was becoming evident in academic and government circles. The American Association for the Advancement of Science petitioned Congress in the same year, 1872, to look into possible waste on public domain lands. The American Forestry Association came into existence in 1875. Naturalist John Muir, who helped organize the Sierra Club in 1889, wrote in Century Magazine the next year on the need to preserve the Yosemite Valley in California. Muir's preference for preservation, rather than simply more efficient use, reflected the tradition of New England transcendentalists like Henry David Thoreau rather than the utilitarian outlook of foresters like Gifford Pinchot.[6]

Alarm over the elimination of pine forests in the upper Midwest and other reports on waste on public domain lands prompted Congress to pass a pivotal but little remarked bill called the General Revision Act of 1891. The law, sought by the American Forestry Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, empowered the president to establish forest reserves by executive order. Soon after the bill became law, President Benjamin Harrison used it to expand the reserve adjoining Yellowstone National Park. By the time he left office

in 1893, he had established 15 reserves totalling more than 15 million acres. One of those, the Pacific Forest Reserve, included Mount Rainier in Washington State. The protection the reserve designation offered was primarily symbolic, since Congress appropriated no money for enforcement.[7]

Reaction in the Puget Sound area to placing Mount Rainier in reserve status was generally favorable. The withdrawal of nearly one million acres for this purpose was supported by the board of trustees of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, the Commercial Club of Tacoma, King County political leaders and one of the largest local mill operations, the Kirkland Land and Lumber Co. Of the local press, only the Democratic Seattle Telegraph, in a Feb. 16, 1893, editorial, objected:

> "If statements are made as to valuable timber, farming and coal-bearing lands which are included in the reservation at Mt. Rainier are true, the boundaries ought to be recast. There is abundant room for pleasure ground without depriving the people of property of immense value in a commercial way."

Commercial community support of the reserve should not be taken at face value, however. As John Ise points out in his 1920 United States Forest Policy, 450,000 acres of the Mount Rainier reserve was actually the property of the Northern Pacific Railway through its land grants. When the reserve was formally designated a national park six years later, the railway was able to exchange its acreage of glaciers, rock and high altitude forest for more commercially valuable property elsewhere in the public domain.[8]

Creation of the 1893 reserve was also supported by members of outdoor recreation clubs. The Mazamas, led by Portland,

Oregon, business leaders, traveled north to meet members in the Puget Sound area for expeditions in the Washington Cascades. A Tacoma member, Fay Fuller, had been the first woman to climb Mount Rainer in 1890. John Muir himself had climbed the mountain in 1888 and camped at the location that now bears his name. He later referred to his night at Camp Muir as "like a night in Minnesota in December."[9]

Symbolic designation of the forest reserves failed to stop their misuse. Loggers and miners routinely trespassed on public domain lands to harvest and dig. Sheepherders allowed flocks to overgraze throughout the Northwest. The taking of public timber for private lumbering, a common practice since the 1860s on Puget Sound, continued. When the new federal Division of Forestry took no action to halt these depredations, Muir, Robert Underwood Johnson of Century Magazine, and Pinchot, then forester of the Vanderbilt Estate in Biltmore, North Carolina, organized a campaign to protect the reserved areas. They were supported by other scientists, academicians and conservationists, as well as chambers of commerce in New York and Los Angeles. In response, Congress in 1896 appropriated $25,000 to the new National Academy of Sciences for a study of the situation. The academy appointed a commission to be led by Charles S. Sargent, a Harvard horticulturist. Included in its membership were Pinchot and, unofficially, Muir.

The resulting report on destruction of the public domain and its recommendations formed the battleground on which the controversy of 1897 was fought. Based on prior knowledge and information gathered in a rapid survey trip through the West in

the summer of 1896, the members concluded that widespread waste and overuse existed on the forest reserves. The report harshly criticized the overgrazing by sheep, a particular complaint of Muir, who regarded them as "hooved locusts." In the final report, which did not appear until May 1, 1897, the commission recommended national park status for Mount Rainier in Washington and the Grand Canyon in Arizona. Of Mount Rainier, the report noted:

> "In all the reserves visited by your committee traces of depredation were visible. These in the Pacific Forest Reserve of Washington were confined to the upper forest belt just below the snow of Mount Rainier, which in summer is much frequented by tourists and campers who frequently set fire to the resinous fir trees for the pleasure of seeing their lives go out in sudden flashes of flame. This wanton custom, which destroys in a moment trees several hundred years old, has greatly injured the beauty of the foreground of one of the noblest and most impressive pictures in the United States."[10]

Preparation of the commission's final report was delayed by a conflict between members who wanted a policy of preservation, led by Sargent, and those who favored more efficient use, led by Pinchot. President Cleveland had asked for the report by Nov. 1, 1896, but the differences could not be reconciled. In January, 1897, Sargent took the president a draft containing the recommendations of the preservationist members, who supported creation of 13 more reserves, including three in Washington State. Overlooking the opposition of Pinchot and other utilitarian members, Sargent suggested that Cleveland use the symbolic moment of Washington's Birthday, Feb. 22, for a dramatic gesture in his last days as president. Cleveland liked the idea and took the action by executive order.[11]

Awareness of the president's action took several days to reach Seattle, where the business community had pinned its hopes for economic revival on the discovery of gold on public domain lands and the shipping of timber on the newly completed transcontinental railroads. The community in 1897 was still recovering from two blows: a disastrous downtown fire in 1889 and the financial panic of 1893. Five of Seattle's 10 lumber mills burned in the fire and rebuilding was slow. The beginning of transcontinental railroad service over the Great Northern Railway in 1893 coincided with the collapse of speculation and overbuilding in anticipation of the event. In 1897, however, the city remained the headquarters of the timber industry in Washington State, where in 1895 there were 225 sawmills and 250 shingle mills. They were supplied, officially, only by trees cut from railroad grant lands and individual claims where the logging was necessary to clear the land for mining. But many of these claims were questionable, the Forestry Commission pointed out. Many operators simply cut from the public domain without bothering with the paperwork.[12]

The community economic depression was strongly felt by the Seattle daily newspapers, whose fate was tied to the fortunes of local merchants, the source of advertising revenue. The Post-Intelligencer, the oldest established newspaper in Seattle, still published despite a forced sale in 1894 after its owner, Leigh S.J. Hunt, suffered financial reverses in mining speculation. The morning P-I had been prosperous prior to the 1893 panic, when Hunt bought out its Democratic opposition, the Daily Telegraph. By 1897, the only other remaining daily newspaper in Seattle was

the Daily Press-Times, which had been bought from near-bankruptcy in the fall of 1896. The new owners of both troubled papers were understandably concerned about the goodwill of their supporting merchant community. The P-I was the official Republican Party organ and had close ties to conservative officeholders with speculative interests in Washington and Alaska. The new publisher, James D. Hoge, continued the conservative tone. His attacks on Populists during the 1896 campaign were so inflammatory that a mob gathered at the P-I and threatened to hang him.[13]

The new owner of the Times, Col. Alden J. Blethen, bought the paper with the help of a loan from James J. Hill of the Great Northern Railway. Although Blethen supported Democrat William Jennings Bryan for president in 1896 and scornfully referred to the rival P-I as the "goldbug organ," he was no less aggressive in courting the advertising revenue of Seattle merchants. He offered 40 columns of free advertising space in a noisy debate over which newspaper was the stoutest booster of the Fourth of July celebration in 1897 and the strongest advertising medium.[14]

The main hope of Seattle merchants, based on a review of advertising in both newspapers, was to supply equipment, clothes and transportation to gold prospectors. Both newspapers ran weekly speculations on gold prospects in the North Cascades, British Columbia and Alaska. Mining and extensive prospecting had been underway in the Monte Cristo area of the North Cascades, northeast of Seattle, since the 1880s. Hopes for the Monte Cristo gold fields prompted Rockefeller interests to build a

smelter at Everett, north of Seattle on Puget Sound, and a railway back into the mountains. By 1897, 76 companies were either mining or seeking claims in the Monte Cristo region. Besides supplies, Seattle companies advertising in the Times and P-I offered boat transportation to Everett, Bellingham, the Canadian gold fields, and Alaska, where major discoveries would, in fact, be made later in the year.[15]

Seattle in 1897 was a city dependent for commercial activity on industries based on the exploitation of natural resources only recently claimed from the public domain or presumably about to be found there. The merchants who supplied participants in these industries reached their potential buyers in part through newspaper advertising, which in turn provided the revenue needed for the newspapers to survive. In this relationship was an economic incentive, aside from the personal philosophies of the owners, to support the continued availability of resources from the public domain.

Both newspapers carried articles referring to commercial use of public domain resources prior to Cleveland's executive order that froze new development of the forest reserves. On Feb. 2, 1897, a P-I editorial complained the federal government was unduly restricting access to these lands, which, in the P-I's view, the state of Washington had only "lent" to the federal government when it joined the union. A Feb. 16 editorial praised a report by the new U.S. Bureau of Forestry that the Northwest contained nearly half the remaining forests in the nation. "The timber business on this coast will have a wonderful stimulus before long," the editorial predicted. On Feb. 24, the P-I

appealed for the building of a smelter in Seattle to capitalize on the anticipated gold bonanza. As for the Times, a half-column of the Feb. 27 issue was devoted to a speculative report on possible copper deposits on a shoulder of Mount Rainier.

Despite the apparent unanimity of the newspapers and the commercial community on the need to increase exploitation of the public lands, there existed in Seattle a number of people concerned about protecting the forest reserves for recreation or less wasteful commercial use. Of 57 Mazama Club members who climbed Mount Rainier in July, 1897, several were from Seattle, including Dr. J.P. Sweeney, photographer Edward Curtis, Dr. E.W. Young and F.W. Cushman. An article in the P-I describing their exploits was written by an Everett member, W.D. Ray, who noted the group attended a reception held by Tacoma members before leaving on the climb. The reception included a briefing on the forest reserves controversy by a representative of the U.S. Geological Survey, although the P-I article did not mention that the group also passed a resolution supporting the reserves.[16]

Besides the recreationists, there were lumbermen in Seattle who perceived the advantages of planned use of forest resources. They were members of a branch of the American Forestry Association organized by University of Washington faculty member Edmond S. Meany. Meany, a man of diverse interests, had attended the 1893 Chicago World's Fair as the publicity agent for the state of Washington. While in Chicago, Meany overheard a lecture by Bernard Fernow, then director of the U.S. Bureau of Forestry. With the encouragement of university president Mark Harrington,

Meany later wrote to Fernow and in 1894 began a course in forestry at the university. By 1897, Meany, who later gained prominence as a regional historian, was registrar at the university and had served in the state Legislature while land was allocated for the present university campus. In addition to teaching his forestry classes, Meany organized a Young Naturalists Society for students and the Forestry Association, which included important adults. Members included attorney John J. McGilvra, who the federal government sent to Seattle in 1860 to prosecute timber poachers from the public domain; Addison G. Foster of the St. Paul and Minnesota Lumber Co., Elias Payn, an Olympia lumberman, and, surprisingly, conservative Republican Judge Thomas Burke, who one biographer calls "the man who built Seattle." Burke was the Seattle representative of James J. Hill, owner of the Great Northern Railway, and more than casually interested in the ownership of both Seattle newspapers. He helped Blethen get a loan from Hill to buy the Times in 1896. In 1898, he would similarly help Republican U.S. Senator John Wilson buy the P-I. He was also, through Henry M. Stimson, an acquaintance of Gifford Pinchot, although certainly not as devoted a conservationist.[17]

The presence of some community leaders in recreation and forestry groups notwithstanding, it seems unlikely there was widepsread preservationist sentiment in Seattle in 1897. It was a depressed frontier community surrounded by undeveloped natural resources that needed only pluck and investment capital to bring prosperity. There were residents of some prominence whose view of the forest reserves differed from those of the commercial

community. But their views were not welcome to the commercial association, the boosters, who supported both daily newspapers. The initial reaction in the Seattle press to word of Cleveland's order establishing the new forest reserves was one of shock.

The news reached Seattle readers first in the Sunday Times of Feb. 28, six days after Cleveland's order. By the time the first Associated Press dispatch reached Seattle, debate was already under way in Congress to overturn the president. The editorial writers of both the Times and, on Monday, the P-I, reacted strongly: "It comes near to being a national calamity," according to the Times. "The state is suffering from the consequences of an intolerable blunder," was the P-I response.[18]

Cleveland's order closed to new commercial activity more than 8 million acres of land in Olympic Peninsula and North Cascades areas surrounding Puget Sound. The three new reserves, Olympic, Washington, and an expanded Mount Rainier reserve, included vast timberlands and thousands of existing mining claims, which were not affected. New claims were prohibited, however, in the Monte Cristo area and other targets of prospectors. In Washington, D.C., regional senators led the immediate but unsuccessful attempt to overturn Cleveland either by amendment or by impeachment. Sen. John Wilson of Washington succeeded in attaching an amendment to reverse the order to the Sundry Civil Bill, but the House substituted a milder resolution that allowed the cutting of timber for mining purposes on reserves. The substitution made no difference, because Cleveland pocket vetoed the bill in his last days in office. The reserves

were allowed to stand, at least for the time being.[19]

The immediate reaction of outrage in the Seattle newspapers was followed by confusion because of the initial success, then failure of congressional action. The Seattle Chamber of Commerce telegraphed a petition of protest that Senator Wilson placed in the Congressional Record the next day. The P-I, underneath a premature headline "Reserves Knocked Out," reprinted a telegram from Wilson to publisher Hoge on the success of the Senate amendment. Wilson became the newspaper's Washington, D.C., correspondent on the controversy while the Times relied on its Associated Press franchise. Cleveland's pocket veto did not become known in Seattle until after the inauguration of President William McKinley on March 5, 1897. McKinley promised to call Congress back into session on March 15, and both newspapers in Seattle began to promote a Chamber of Commerce campaign to abolish the new forest reserves. In a March 5 editorial, the P-I said:

> "This much is certain: as long as the reservation remains in force it will be difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to enlist capital in any amount for the development of a single unpatented mine lying within the limits of the reservation."[20]

The P-I began daily exhortations of the Chamber of Commerce, Board of Trade, the mining stock exchange and other business organizations to back Senator Wilson's efforts in Washington, D.C. The differentiation between news and editorials was unclear, as the lead of a front page story indicated:

> "Unless the new administration takes prompt action, the forestry reserves proclamation will be in full force and effect, and its enforcement will operate as a direct calamity to the state of Washington."[21]

On March 7, the P-I carried a front page cartoon portraying former President Cleveland, carrying a shotgun, sitting on the back of a blindfolded mule and blocking miners and lumber workers from going to work in their mills. On March 10, the P-I began reprinting sympathetic editorials from out-of-state newspapers, beginning with the Boston Journal and the Louisville Courier-Journal. No editorials favoring the forest reserves were reprinted except as the target of rebuttals by the P-I. Among those attacked was one from the Springfield, Massachusetts, Republican, which had said:

> "Who then are the people in Washington and other states .. who are making their clamor against the act of the president? They belong, no doubt, to that class of timber thieves and prospectors and ranchmen who make a business of appropriating public land to their own use without authority or expense."

The P-I reply, besides defending lumbermen, miners and ranchers while attacking Eastern myopia, succinctly expressed the newspaper's view of community opinion on the subject:

> "The people of Washington entirely and without one dissenting voice, are protesting the making of these reservations.[22]

To support the anti-reservation campaign, the P-I also began to reprint resolutions passed by chambers of commerce and boards of trade in Seattle, Bellingham, and Snohomish County, in which the Monte Cristo gold prospecting area was located. The newspaper served as an organizational focus for the commercial community opposing the reserves by sponsoring protest meetings, printing the times and locations and giving extensive coverage to speakers who attacked Cleveland's action.

The other daily newspaper, the Times, also opposed the

reserves editorially and printed articles describing the chamber of commerce campaign. The names of financial contributors to the campaign were printed and praised. However, the Times coverage of Washington, D.C., events relied on relatively restrained AP dispatches, and the paper did not join the shrill protests of its competitor. Blethen poked fun at its excesses and referred to P-I coverage as that of the "goldbug press."[23]

The pattern both papers began in the weeks following McKinley's inauguration continued through June 4, 1897, when the new president signed into law a bill that delayed permanent establishment of the reserves for another nine months. Mining and logging would be permitted under easily attained circumstances. Congress had not abolished the reserves, as western entrepreneurs had wanted, but allowed commercial claims to resume temporarily under federal supervision. The Seattle newspapers grudgingly accepted the outcome. "This is Better," read the Seattle Times headline. The P-I editorial read:

> " ... sentiment is such ... in states which have been denuded of their forests and now bitterly repent the whole destruction that we can probably hope for no better terms."[24]

From Feb. 22 to June 4, the two newspapers carried a total of 83 editorials, reprinted editorials, news stories, reprinted resolutions, and letters to the editor. Sixty, or 82 percent of these articles, were opposed to the forest reserves or contained only criticism of President Cleveland. In the P-I, 51 of 57 entries, 89 percent, were negative toward the reserves, as were 17 of 26, or 65 percent in the Times. Of the 32 articles that appeared in locations in the P-I other than the editorial page,

only four contained information favorable to the reserves. Only one, a reprint of part of the Forestry Commission report, was wholly complimentary. Of non-editorial page articles in the Times, 8 of 19 contained favorable references but only one -- again, a reprint of the Forestry Commission report -- was wholly favorable.

The overwhelming representation of both newspapers was, then, that sentiment in Seattle was unanimously opposed to the forestry reserves or nearly so. This view was that of the commercial community, as reflected in the resolutions and speeches in the newspapers and attributed to chambers of commerce, boards of trade, conservative political leaders and the mining industry. Yet, according to private papers and secondary works concerned with the history of Seattle in this period, there was significant support for the reserves or at least the philosophy behind them. Both newspapers represented this viewpoint, which differed from their own, only perfunctorily or with some ridicule.

Two letters to the editor favorable to the reserves were printed during the period. One was from Addison F. Foster of the St. Paul and Minnesota Lumber Co., a member of the local branch of the American Forestry Association, and it stressed planned use of resources. The other, by Willis Bailey, a U.S. Geological Survey scientist who in 1897 completed the first government mineral exploration of the North Cascades, pointed out that abrupt as the Cleveland order was, it did not affect existing mining claims.[25]

The only news stories mentioning local support for the

reserves resulted from an appearance by Edmond S. Meany at one of the weekly rallies in opposition organized by the P-I and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. Both papers treated Meany's speech in support of the reserves condescendingly, although it was not ignored. Meany was a person of some stature at the university and an acquaintance of important community leaders, including Judge Burke and Daniel Gilman, former editor of the Seattle Telegraph.

The March 20, 1897, P-I ran a story about the meeting which listed Meany as the principal speaker, although it noted that he was "rather antagonistic to the general views on the forest reserve." Meany's briefly mentioned remarks were rebutted in an editorial the next day that insisted "yet in the whole of Western Washington, not one single voice has been raised in support of the Cascade Forest Reservation as made." The final qualification, "as made," was an apparent reference to Meany's view that Cleveland's order would have to be modified to be effective. Meany was not named in the editorial, which also claimed the P-I was a friend of forest conservation and stated erroneously there was no timber in the forest reserves.[26]

In the Times, Meany's remarks were treated as a secondary aspect of a rally denouncing the reserves. A lengthy headline deck read: "E.S. Meany made a speech which did not harmonize with the great majority of the people present." The text of the story noted:

> "While Mr. Meany defended the commission on whose famous recommendation Cleveland made his famous order, he showed the Seattle spirit for which he is noted by saying he did not wish to see the miner prevented from removing the hidden

treasures of the earth."[27]

The next locally written story favorable to the forest reserves did not appear until six months later, in September, 1897, three months after the congressional moratorium was signed into law. Gifford Pinchot, who had been hired to survey the new reserves for the U.S. Bureau of Forestry, stopped in Seattle after horseback trips into both the North Cascades and Olympic mountains. He was quoted extensively in a long P-I article praising the philosophy behind the reserves and the necessity for planned use to achieve prosperity. Besides the story praising Pinchot's views, the paper also ran an editorial that contrasted sharply with its viewpoint of three months before:

> "Quite a new aspect is placed upon the intention of the government, or perhaps it would be more just to say the Forest Reserve Commission, by the intelligent presentation of it made by Mr. Gifford Pinchot. ... He has found no lack of sympathetic aid in his work in this state."[28]

Pinchot's surprising treatment by the P-I reflected no spontaneous mellowing of views but direct intercession on the forester's behalf by no less an important community leader than Judge Burke. As Pinchot recalled the incident in his autobiography, Breaking New Ground:

> "... After that to Seattle, where long conferences with Judge Thomas Burke helped me to understand public opinion in the State of Washington and convinced him that the Forest Reserve policy was wise and right. Judge Burke took me to see the editor of the Post-Intelligencer, commonly known as the P-I. He, as my diary puts it, 'came to the right view,' and gave me a chance to tell about it in an interview in his paper.[29]

Pinchot was so pleased with the result's of Burke's intercession he later wrote and asked the judge to write a 500-word article giving the "western point of view" in The Forester.

the journal of the American Forestry Association. Burke apparently passed this request on to Meany, who wrote in the journal's May, 1898, issue:

> "During our period from March 1 to June 1 our people were greatly enlightened on the aims and objects of forestry both through stirring articles in the newspapers and through spirited public meetings."[30]

The controversy over creation of the forest reserves indicates in Seattle the daily newspapers of 1897 reflected almost solely the political viewpoint of the commercial community. Sentiment in favor of conservation was either ignored, or, in the case of citizens too prominent to ignore, belittled or ridiculed. The only favorable consideration of the Forestry Commission recommendations came after the representative of one of the strongest economic forces in the region, the Great Northern Railway, interceded directly with one of the newspapers.

All this suggests a relationship involving political communication had formed between the commercial press and the merchant community that informally resembled the relationship between political party and subsidized press in the Jacksonian period. The newspaper, dependent on advertising revenue for survival, reflected the political view of the commercial community in opposing a political development -- conservation -- that might affect the community economic health and the buying ability of its residents. Arguments that opposed conservation were promoted, the papers served as an organizational focus for attacking the forest reserves, and dissenting viewpoints were ignored or rebutted.

This paper does not attempt to argue that the press in every

frontier community opposed the idea of conservation or that a formal relationship was established between the advertisers and the commercial press on political matters. In Portland, Oregon, for example, the editor of the Oregonian was himself a member of the Mazamas and the paper strongly supported creation of the forest reserves.[31] But in Seattle, the question is raised whether commercial support of the press was instrumental in determining political viewpoints even through the era of direct political subsidies had passed.

NOTES

[1]Gerald J. Baldasty, "The Jacksonian Era Press: Serving Party and the Public," unpublished journalism monograph, University of Washington, 1983, p. 1.

[2]Michael Schudson, Discovering the News, Basic Books Inc., pp. 15-24.

[3]Alfred McClung Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America, The MacMillan Co., 1937, p. 181. See also Allan R. Pred, Urban Growth and the Circulation of Information: The United States System of Cities, 1790-1840, Harvard University Press, 1973.

[4]Daniel Boorstin, The Americans:The National Experience, Vintage Books, New York, 1965, p. 125; See also Barbara Lee Cloud, "Start the Presses: The Birth of Journalism in Washington Territory," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1979.

[5]See Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform, Vintage Books, New York, 1955, and Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, Yale University Press, 1967.

[6]For general discussions of the conservation movement in the United States prior to 1910 see: Charles R. Van Hise, The Conservation of Natural Resources in the United States, The MacMillan Co., 1913; Roy M. Robbins, Our Landed Heritage, Peter Smith Co.,1950; John Ise, The United States Forest Policy, Yale University Press, 1920, and Gifford Pinchot, Breaking New Ground, University of Washington Press, 1947. Conservation in the Pacific Northwest receives particular attention in Lawrence Rakestraw, A History of Forest Conservation in the Pacific Northwest, 1891-1913, Arno Press, 1979, and Elmo R. Richardson, The Politics of Conservation, University of California Press, 1962.

[7]Ise, Chapt. 1; Stephen S. Visher, "The Public Domain," and Harold M. Rose, "Conservation in the United States," in Guy-Harold Smith, ed., Conservation of Natural Resources, third edition, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965, pp. 3-6, 21-22; Nash, pp. 122-133.

[8]Ise, pp. 114-118; Wallace A. Atwood, "The Conservation Movement in America," A.E. Parkins and J.R. Whitaker, eds., Our Natural Resources and Their Conservation, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1936, p. 3; Rakestraw, pp. 42-43; Ise, pp. 183-184; Robbins, p. 305.

[9]Rakestraw, p. 28; Richardson, p. 12; Fred Beckey, Cascade Alpine Guide: Columbia River to Stevens Pass, The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1979, p. 87.

[10]Pinchot and Nash both provide valuable background on the work of the Forestry Commission. See *Inauguration of a Forest Policy for the Forested Lands of the United States*, Report of the Committee Appointed by the National Academy of Sciences to the Secretary of the Interior, Government Printing Office, May 1, 1897, p. 19.

[11]Pinchot, p. 107.

[12]Clarence B. Bagley, *History of Seattle*, S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., Chicago 1916, pp. 233-235; Forestry Commission Report, p. 17.

[13]Bagley, pp. 193-94; Keith Murray, "Republican Party politics in Washington during the Progressive Era," Ph. D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1946, pp. 10-13.

[14]Bagley, p. 197; Elaon Nick Coroch, "Col. Alden J. Blethen and the *Seattle Times*," M.A. thesis, University of Washington, 1966, pp. 30-49; *Seattle Daily Times*, June 7, 1897.

[15]Rakestraw, op cit, p. 68; See any issue of the *Times* or *Post-Intelligencer* in this period for evidence of the fixation on mining and prospecting.

[16]*Post-Intelligencer*, Aug. 1, 1897.

[17]Rakestraw, op cit, p. 280; Ivan Doig, "John McGilvra and Timber Trespass, *Forest History*, January, 1970, p. 6; Edmond S. Meany Papers, University of Washington; Young Naturalist Society of Washington Papers, University of Washington; Thomas Burke Papers, University of Washington; Robert C. Nesbit, *He Built Seattle: A Biography of Judge Thomas Burke*, University of Washington Press, 1961, p. 413.

[18]*Times*, Feb. 28, March 3, 1897; *P-I*, March 5, 1897.

[19]Robbins, p. 314; Rakestraw, p. 68; Ise, pp. 130-32.

[20]*P-I*, March 1, 5; *Times*, March 6, 1897.

[21]*P-I*, March 6, 1897.

[22]*P-I* March 7, 1897; Robbins, p. 319.

[23]*P-I*, March 10, 11, 13, 16; *Times*, March 8, 15, 16, 1897.

[24]Ise, pp. 141-2; *Times*, May 13; *P-I*, May 27, 1897.

[25]*Times*, April 23; *P-I*, April 10, 1897; Fred Beckey, *Cascade Alpine Guide: Rainy Pass to Fraser River*, The Mountaineers, Seattle, 1981, p. 278.

[26]*P-I*, March 20, 1897.

[27]*Times*, March 20, 1897.

[28]P-I, Aug. 6, 1897.

[29]Pinchot, p. 126.

[30]See correspondence from Pinchot to Burke in Burke Papers, University of Washington, particularly Dec. 30, 1897; Jan. 31, 1898, and Oct. 25, 1898; The Forester, May, 1898, p. 100.

[31]Rakestraw, p. 49; Richardson, p. 27.

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The University of Washington Manuscripts Collection has a number of papers that relate to the forest reserves controversy of 1897. Particularly helpful were those of Thomas E. Burke and Edmond S. Meany. Others include the Young Naturalists Society of Washington and the papers of Daniel Gilman and John McGilvra.

Gifford Pinchot's main collection of papers is at the Library of Congress but his autobiography, Breaking New Ground, contains a detailed discussion of the Forestry Commission and his travels in the Northwest as the survey agent for the U.S. Bureau of Forestry, predecessor to the U.S. Forest Service.

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